



Democratic State of the Union Response Center

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DEMOCRATS FIGHT TO LOWER THE COST OF HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES

Democrats are fighting for the millions of Americans who do not have a job or health insurance, or who have seen their retirement savings disappear over the past year. As Republicans continue to protect the wealthy corporate interests that put them in power, Democrats are putting American families first. Over the coming year, Democrats will work to build a safer and stronger nation where everyone has an equal opportunity to build a better future for themselves and their children.

Too many Americans can't afford health care. America has the best health care system in the world, but millions of our citizens still struggle to pay high health care premiums and have to fight to receive quality care. In the face of steadily increasing premiums and the skyrocketing cost of prescription drugs, Americans are continually faced with the challenge of finding and keeping affordable health care. Today one in six Americans has no health insurance, and more than 2.4 million Americans have become uninsured since the beginning of the Bush administration.

Democrats are fighting to improve medical care and make it affordable. Democrats led efforts to protect and improve Medicare for seniors and people with disabilities, and to expand health insurance to cover millions of children nationwide. Democrats want to make health insurance more affordable for all Americans, including small business owners and employees, and senior citizens. Democrats support assistance for small businesses to help them provide good health insurance to their workers, measures to reduce prescription drug prices for everyone, and a real prescription drug benefit that allows Medicare to get the best price for seniors.

Democrats support an affordable Medicare prescription drug benefit for all seniors. Democrats support a Medicare prescription drug benefit that helps seniors, not HMOs and big drug companies. Democrats fought for a Medicare benefit that is affordable; guaranteed within the Medicare program; and available to all Americans no matter where they live. Democrats opposed Republican legislation which makes millions of seniors pay more for drugs than they do today, and did nothing to lower drug prices. Their bill turns Medicare into a voucher program, and focuses on HMOs' needs instead of seniors' needs.

Democrats know people of color face special challenges. Democrats are pushing an agenda to raise the standard of health care for minority communities. Our plan would give states the option to expand health coverage to lower-income Americans who find it hard to afford insurance. Democrats would also increase resources for public hospitals and community health centers, which are disproportionately the source of health care for minority populations. The Democratic agenda also calls for training doctors to care for diverse patients, and focusing on prevention of diseases such as diabetes, stroke, heart disease, cancer, asthma and HIV/AIDS.

Democrats continue to push for better veterans' health care. Democrats have been working tirelessly to deliver our veterans what is due to them. Republicans broke their promise to provide an additional \$1.8 billion for veterans health care while the VA system is in crisis. Today, over 30,000 veterans are waiting 6 months or longer for an appointment at a Veterans Administration hospital. Democrats oppose Bush Administration proposals to increase veterans' premiums and co-payments.